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# NEW YORK Saturday Evening Post A HOME WEEKLY

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Vol. IX.

E. F. Biddle, W. Adams, PUBLISHERS.  
David Adams.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 17, 1878.

TERMS IN ADVANCE: One copy, four months, \$1.00  
One copy, one year, . . . . . 2.00  
Two copies, one year, . . . . . 3.00

No. 440

## AN IDYL OF THE KING.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

"There goes the king, so young and fair,  
His smile and laugh so detonair!  
He smiled on me, the rustic maid,  
And I shrunk from him, half-afraid,  
For he is royal, and wears a crown;  
His robes are trimmed with snowy down;  
The ring that glistens on his hand  
Would purchase all my father's land!"  
The maiden looked from eyes of blue,  
And saw the courtly retinue;  
But more she saw: upon the grass,  
Glittering like a bead of glass,  
A wondrous ring! It made her start;  
She felt the beating of her heart!  
He lost the ring—this king of ours,  
He dropped it here among the flowers.  
"I'll send it to the palace; no!  
I'll take it there myself, when low  
The sun has sunk behind the west,  
And twilight dons her starry crest!"  
So to the palace went the maid,  
Trembling, blushing, still afraid.  
She found the king in robes of state  
Beyond the lofty, guarded gate.  
"My ring! ha! ha!" the monarch said.  
The gentle maiden hung her head.  
"I found it on the ground, beset  
By many a blushing violet!"  
"Nay, maid; I left it there for thee!  
It fits thy pretty finger—see!"  
Here in the palace thou shalt dwell,  
A rose transplanted from the dell;  
No maid of honor! far above  
That station in this court of love!"  
The maiden quickly raised her head:  
"No palace home for me!" she said.  
"I have a home, sire. Let me go  
Back to the summer winds that blow  
From morn till night across the heath,  
And make it fragrant with their breath.  
The true our cottage home is small,  
And bare, perhaps, the darksome wall;  
But peace is there! My heart is free!  
Here in the palace would it be?"  
"Nay, let me go!" she pleading said;  
"And blessings on thy kingly head!"  
The monarch smiled and whispered low:  
"As thou hast chosen, maiden, go!"  
He blushed for shame, then lost his voice  
Before the artless maiden's choice!

## Whom Will She Marry? OR, BETH FOSS.

The Parson's Daughter.

BY A PARSON'S DAUGHTER,  
AUTHOR OF "PRETTY PURITAN," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

A RASH STEP.

"Rashness and haste make all things unsecure."

In a long linen cloak and brown straw English walking-hat, with its silk trimmings and mottled wing upon the side, Bethel Foss, when she started upon her lonely night journey, looked very plain and ladylike, and not at all likely to attract to herself any unpleasant notice.

Over her hat she had tied a thick dark veil, anxious that the moonlight should tell no tales concerning her identity; and as she hurried along the damp, fragrant country road, a little used thoroughfare, but the nearest way from the depot to the station, she clung tightly in her small gloved hand her portemonnaie; she resolved not even to buy her ticket at the Greenwilde depot, in order to avoid observation, and any outgrowing village scandal. But this course was indeed thrust upon her; for though she was already hurrying, she heard the whistle of the approaching train while still quite a space intervened between herself and the depot.

It never occurred to Beth that in this little instant might lay a Providential interdict upon the fulfillment of her plan. She thought, rather, that nothing now should interfere with her purpose; and gathering up her skirts, she ran with all the graceful speed and motion her country life had made natural to her; arriving upon the platform just as the glistening row of cars came ringing and panting to a stop at the up-stanch, and breathlessly rushed across the platform toward the nearest carriage.

"That's a drawing-room car, miss," called a voice from behind her, and a man sprung down upon the rails and hurried her along the track to the nearest passenger-coach, swinging his light form upon the steps, just as the train resumed its motion.

"Oh! my pocket-book!" exclaimed Miss Foss, in distress.

If Miles Haines, the station-agent, had not been sure before of the identity of the veiled lady he had helped upon the train, he was positive, as he picked up the missing valuable, and ran beside the now rapidly-moving cars, to hand it to its fair owner, that she was none other than Bethel Foss, the parson's daughter.

The feeling of strangeness and loneliness which Miss Foss experienced as she walked into the dimly-lighted car, where there were but few ladies, and all with escorts, and many gentlemen who turned a cursory glance upon the tall, slender figure, with its neat traveling-dress and closely-veiled face, was something quite new to her. She nestled into the furthest corner of the first unoccupied seat, and presently the attention of the passengers reverted to their books and papers, or the dreams from which they had been momentarily aroused by the stopping of the train. Then, thinking it no longer neces-



"And good-by, pretty one," he added, laughingly apostrophizing Bethel from the carriage window.

say to keep herself closely veiled, Bethel threw aside her light disguise, and sat staring out at the moonlight landscape, and thinking of Harry Sewall, of her living, and her dead parent. She had but a faint, dim recollection of her mother, and of her dead.

She wondered where it was that Harry had gone on business, and if he had carried away with him any sadder heart than now lay within her own bosom, though she was going to meet her lover. Try as she might to put away from her recollections of his handsome, honest face, and his sincere blue eyes they would not be banished; and she seemed to feel and share, in her own soul, the pain she had given the friend of her childhood and youth.

"But I could not marry him," she moaned. "I could only do as I have done. And, perhaps, very soon, Harry will forget his love for me, and, looking back upon to-day, say, 'I am glad Bethel Foss refused to marry me.' And yet I do not like to think that I have felt so strongly about him," she added, still studying the fleeting scenario. "I wonder why it is that I am so selfish, that I must needs wish to retain all the love that ever has been mine? Shall I never find any so satisfying that I can willingly, gladly, fling all other affections aside?"

Thus Bethel sought to read, and could not, the mystery of her nature, her slowly-developing woman-soul. She knew that love was dear to her, that her life revolved in its fervent glow as a flower revels in the hot kisses of the sun; but could she ever give such passion as it pleased her to receive? Sometimes she felt, vaguely, that as yet she had never sounded the capabilities of her own heart; and again, she believed that her girlish frankness could be tutored by those gentlemen who were watching her never thought of addressing her, as she made her way to the street where she looked about in evident perplexity.

"Carriage, miss? Carriage?" clamored a dozen persistent cabmen; but the young lady shrunk from them, and spying a policeman walked swiftly toward him. The two gentlemen who were following her were near enough to catch her low inquiry:

"Which way is Fifth avenue? I am a little bewildered."

"That," said the policeman, tersely, with a slight wavy of his hand. He did not give much heed to the young lady. His attention was engrossed by a foppishly-dressed man who had emerged from the depot and stood upon the curb swinging a cane and watching the various passengers.

"That chap belongs to the light-fingered gentry," remarked the policeman, to himself.

"I wonder what job he is looking for?" But when the "chap" in question crossed Forty-second street and took his way to the westward, the policeman allowed his further interest in him to become passive.

"The lady cannot be going far," said the gentleman who had been called Jack, when he heard Bethel's question regarding Fifth avenue.

"Suppose we take a carriage to the *cafe*, and call a cabby to drive slowly? We can watch her just as well."

"All right," assented his friend; and presently, from the open carriage window, they were watching the lonely young lady, who, having reached the broad thoroughfare, seemed sure of her way and walked swiftly and confidently.

The street was well lighted, and the moon, too, shone brightly; so that when the graceful figure turned into Forty-first street, glancing up at the numbers of the houses, Max replied to the driver's inquiry as to whether he should turn aside from the avenue.

"Oh, no; it is not worth while; drive on!

"And good-by, pretty one," he added, laughingly apostrophizing Bethel from the carriage window, as the driver gave the whip to the horses. "I must confess I should not like a sister of mine to be wandering around this way."

that the affair would end in this way; Bethel Foss had been spoiled by indulgence; it hoped the person could realize that fact now; what a good thing it was that his wife had died before this disgraced! Greenwilde was too, though the knowledge must have come to him with surprising suddenness, that Bethel's conduct had helped to kill her mother; Mrs. Foss had grieved herself to death over her daughter's self-willed preference for Andral, and the shameful way in which she had treated Harry Sewall; for, somehow, it had been an accepted fact, since Bethel had worn the shortest dresses and Harry had first donned long trowsers, that these two were to "make a match." And after all this iniquity on Bethel's part, to think of her deserting her poor father and going to the city, alone, at night, to meet her lover, by appointment, and sail with him for Europe in the morning! There was nothing concerning the movements of the person under which Greenwilde did not desire to know, and did not consider himself bound to criticize!

The preparations for the burial of Mrs. Foss had gone too far to be delayed even in the face of Bethel's dreadful absence; and every one was curious to attend this funeral, where there would be but one mourner, and to see how the good parson would look and act under the double calamity that had befallen him. As the hour of service approached the church was thronged—not only with a sad and sympathizing audience, sincerely mourning the death of a gentle, benevolent lady, but with a curious, eager, gossipy crowd, as well; and when the awesome tolling of the bell announced that the funeral *cortege* had left the parsonage, and was wending its way toward the church, all eyes in the crowd were turned equal to that with which the audience at a fashionable wedding awaits the coming of the full-dressed bride. Presently the clergyman, who had been summoned from a neighboring village to officiate, appeared at the church door, open book in hand, and advanced up the aisle reading aloud a portion of the solemn burial service. Following him came the funeral train; and a hardly suppressed bustle passed over the congregation, and necks were eagerly craned to see who followed the coffin to the seat reserved for the mourners.

Perhaps after all, Miss Foss had returned to attend her mother's funeral. But no! Only the parson, and just behind him the faithful Jemima, walked slowly after the pall-bearers. Meaning glances were sent from eye to eye, and to the Greenwilde population the parson's daughter was Bethel Foss no longer, but Mrs. Rial Andral.

The funeral services were lengthy and impressive; and over Mrs. Foss's coffin, down upon the fragile hands, clasped tranquilly above the peaceful breast, many sorrowing tears were dropped, beside those shed by her husband and Miss Pierce. But, despite much sincere mourning, there were strange whisperings during that period of confusion that generally occurs, at a village funeral, while the audience is looking its last on the face of the dead, and preparing to the cortege. This time, not Bethel's name, but Jemima's, was the theme of conjecture. Rumors were repeated in which the parson himself was strangely mentioned; and had he not been so wrapped in grief, he might have detected some oddly-critical and even contemptuous glances cast upon him as he passed. But if Mr. Foss failed to see the curious regard of which he was the object, Jemima's eyes were more keen. Under her breath, she whispered:

"The gappin' idiots! It's a pity these ain't Bible days and the good Lord warn't here with his whip, to drive them all about their business! I wonder what job he is looking for?" But when the "chap" in question crossed Forty-second street and took his way to the westward, the policeman allowed his further interest in him to become passive.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE LOST LAMB.

"Full well the poor whisper, circling round,  
Convey'd the dismal tidings."

WITHIN the memory of the inhabitants of Greenwilde, there had never been a funeral so largely attended, as regarded congregation, nor so slightly, as regarded mourners, as was the funeral of Mrs. Foss.

In all country villages, but, perhaps, most of all in a New England village, ill-news and scandal travel with almost telegraphic swiftness. While one valley separates us, as now, it is so easy to disseminate among a population necessarily spending the greater part of its time upon household and business occupations, and where there is no town-crier, nor even a morning nor evening paper, the fact still remains that in some wonderfully rapid manner the intelligence has traveled the length and breadth of the township.

So it was upon the day the parson's wife was to be buried. Every one in Greenwilde had heard of Bethel Foss's strange disappearance—her rumored elopement upon the night preceding her mother's funeral. In fact, every one knew, and, according to their own assertions, had known all along, of her infatuation for the dark, wealthy stranger, who had been staying at the Mansion House. Wise Greenwilde shook its head, and remarked, sagely, that it had always thought

"Is that all? Surely you have telegraphed?"

"Oh, yes," said Deacon Peck, "we have telegraphed to the Police Department and to the Andral chap."

"Oh, she has never gone to meet him!" asserted the father, momently raising his head with energy.

"Well, brother Foss, that's the light in which you look at it," commanded Deacon Strict, dictatorially; "but other folks must be allowed their views on such a subject, and it's pretty generally known that Miss Foss and that Andral chap were considerably smitten with each other. He could have more attention than any other young woman at all the picnics and gossips, and made all the opportunities he could for walking with her; and Sam Travers, the postmaster's clerk, saw them out riding together, the very night that Mrs. Foss died; and

then it looks rather suspicious, you see, that the next time she went to the hotel to see him, and when he wasn't there got his address; and Thorne's folks know all about that."

"I can't believe it—I can't believe it!" murmured the father, though he saw how dreadfully facts told against Beth. But Deacon Strict proceeded, inexactly:

"The fellow had gone away that morning, and on his way to the cars posted a letter to Miss Foss. Sam Travers stamped it. Presently in comes Harry Sewall, and says he'll bring up your mail, and so fetches her that very letter."

The parson groaned. He was thinking, now, of that other fateful letter Harry had brought him, and scarcely heeded Deacon Strict's closing words.

"So you see, there ain't much doubt, in most folks' mind, as to where Miss Foss has gone."

"But we'll do all we can for you, brother Foss," remarked Deacon Peck, kindly; "we'll let you know the moment we get any further news—a message from the police or Andral."

"I wonder if I had better go to New York myself?" suggested Mr. Foss, irresolutely, at first.

"It won't do no good," announced brother Strict, decidedly.

But the clergyman made up his mind, quite regardless of the advice of this prominent member of his flock.

"Indeed, I must go! I must go!" he said, getting up and walking the floor, nervously.

"I can catch the express and if any one can find Bethel I can! I will tell Jemima to pack my satchel immediately."

Deacon Strict was severely silent; but Deacon Peck remarked, soothingly:

"I don't know, after all, but it's the best thing you can do, parson. It may take your mind off your other affliction; and who knows but what, after all, as you say, you're the best one to find your daughter. You'll get home in time for the dinner Saturday night?"

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Foss, excitedly, as the deacon rose to depart.

That night Jemima was left to indulge her grief by herself, and to keep the parsonage free from intruders. While Mr. Foss, being whirled toward the great city, had ample opportunity as Bethel had had under similar circumstances to review the startling events that had followed each other so rapidly within the past forty-eight hours. But, unlike his daughter, though suffering from severe mental and physical exhaustion, his less youthful and bolder constitution found no relief in sleep. So thinking busily, his mind dwelt on the remarkable fate which had given back to Bethel a mother just at the time when she had lost one; and again he wondered, as he had in those first moments of wild apprehension at Bethel's flight, if it could be possible that his daughter had seen and been influenced by the letter from the lawyers, relating to Madame De Witt—as that lady still preferred to call herself, in consideration of her long aban-

donment of marital ties. Though Mr. Foss would fain have dismissed this suggestion as indignantly as to his friends, he had dismissed the one relating to Bethel's elopement, he felt the both theories must receive a certain consideration at his hands; and he determined that his first act, upon arriving in the city, should be to answer the letter he had received from Tremaine and Merritt, and demand of them any knowledge they might have of Beth's whereabouts.

From the conductor he received an identification of Bethel and the assurance that she had journeyed to New York. Arriving at Grand Central Depot he hoped to obtain some clew to her movements; but gaining none from the night officials, as he strode out upon the walk he sought him of inquiring of the policemen. That protector of the public peace, after evident earnest cogitations, failed to recollect having seen such a woman upon the previous night as the gentleman described.

"But," remarked the M. P., "you might ask the cabbies. If some chap met her, they'd been most likely to take a conveyance."

Mr. Foss turned to prosecute some inquiries in that line, when the policeman's memory suddenly revivified.

"See here, mister!" he said, arresting the person with a tap upon the shoulder. "I believe I've struck the very young woman, now, tail with a quiet sort of voice, and a traveling cloak, but no baggage?"

Mr. Foss nodded.

"There ain't no use you're asking the cabbies. She came up to me, and asked the way to Fifth avenue, and walked off, right smart, alone. I had my eye upon a suspicious-looking chap, at the time, and that's what made me forget the young woman; but I remember, now, she went off alone."

And the policeman sauntered away, leaving Mr. Foss to cross over to the Grand Union Hotel, where, after throwing himself upon the bed in the room assigned him, the clergyman dictated a letter to Messrs. Tremaine and Merritt.

#### CHAPTER IX.

##### A FATHER'S GRIEVE.

"Nothing's so hard but search will find it out."

"You have news for me?"

It was Cecile De Witt who asked the question, advancing to her visitor with extended, welcoming hand—graceful, elegant, as always, but eager, and with an odd little flame of color flickering, like the light of a candle, in her perfect cheeks.

The gentleman whom she addressed was the head of the law firm who had undertaken the management of her affairs; and the unusually early hour at which he had presented himself, coupled with the very fact that he had come in person, instead of sending her a message, had excited Madame De Witt with the hope that he had some important communication for her.

Mr. Tremaine took the seat to which his client motioned him, while she sunk with languid, bewitching motion into a great satin chair near.

"A little, madam," he replied, courteously; "but nothing's so hard but search will find it out."

"You do not mean," she tripped, smiling,

"that Mr. Foss has refused to allow any interview between myself and our daughter?" He has, I suppose, that power until she is of age; but by the laws of this state a young woman attains her majority at eighteen, does she not? He cannot interfere with our meeting long."

"You are jumping altogether too quickly to conclusions, madam," said the lawyer, with a smile which seemed to add—but that is a woman's way. "Mr. Foss is in town, and has written us; but not in regard to giving his daughter to your guardianship."

"He wishes an interview, then, with me," suggested madame, with a slight drooping of her tones, but no other perceptible change of manner, save that what he felt her feelings at the prospect of meeting the husband from whom she had been absent so long.

"No, madam; if Mr. Foss desires an interview with you, he certainly did not communicate any such wish to us. He announces that his daughter has suddenly, and mysteriously, left her home; and asks if we can give him any clew to her whereabouts. He is, I think, suspicious that the event may have occurred through our, or your, agency." And the lawyer paused and glanced intently into Cecile's face.

A charmingly soft and appealing light came to the lady's eyes, and a pleasant little rippling laughter to her lips.

"I think you, Mr. Tremaine, will exonerate me from all blame in this matter. The idea of obtaining the society of my daughter, except with her own and her father's full consent, has never occurred to me. As my confidential friend and agent, you are fully acquainted with every step I have taken in this matter, since all have been directed through your suggestion and advice."

"Then, perhaps, it is as well for me to see Mr. Foss, and discuss his mind of any idea that you are in the least cognizant of his daughter's movements. Do you care to see his note? I

brought it with me, thinking it might possibly be of interest to you."

"I would like to see it, yes; I do not quite understand about Bethel's disappearance."

"Nor will you gain much information through this," said Mr. Tremaine, as he handed his companion, inexactly:

"The fellow had gone away that morning, and on his way to the cars posted a letter to Miss Foss. Sam Travers stamped it. Presently in comes Harry Sewall, and says he'll bring up your mail, and so fetches her that very letter."

The parson groaned. He was thinking, now, of that other fateful letter Harry had brought him, and scarcely heeded Deacon Strict's closing words.

"So you see, there ain't much doubt, in most folks' mind, as to where Miss Foss has gone."

"But we'll do all we can for you, brother Foss," remarked Deacon Peck, kindly; "we'll let you know the moment we get any further news—a message from the police or Andral."

"I wonder if I had better go to New York myself?" suggested Mr. Foss, irresolutely, at first.

"It won't do no good," announced brother Strict, decidedly.

But the clergyman made up his mind, quite regardless of the advice of this prominent member of his flock.

"Indeed, I must go! I must go!" he said, getting up and walking the floor, nervously.

"Only upon the same grounds for which strange absences and flights of young ladies of that age may often be accounted for."

Madame De Witt darted the lawyer a swift glance.

"I hope," she remarked, quietly, "that my daughter is not eloping with her mother's folly."

"I beg your pardon," cried Mr. Tremaine, "I hope you will be so gracious as to believe that I had forgotten your own unfortunate history, and not the slightest idea of referring to it."

"I shall believe what you wish me to," said his client, with her usual charming grace; "but I cannot forget that I deserve the reproof which your words seem to convey; and you can imagine how terribly I should deprecate my daughter's following in my footsteps. I hope it is not so; but that this absence of hers may be accounted for in some other way. For, oh!"

she added, with sudden fervency, "now that I have come to you with almost certainty of knowing her and loving her, how can I scarcely understand how intensely I desire to find her in this city?"

"Nothing can be different from what it is," returned the parson drearily; "but if Bethel had stayed with me, I could not have known her from her mother, nor interfered with what you opinion, and mine, upon mutual consultation, seemed for her best good."

And with that assurance the lawyer was forced to go away content, while Mr. Foss started upon his return to his parish.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 438.)

your daughter; and I fail to understand why they should not marry when they chose, or why their marriage should be regarded in the light of an unhappy event."

"There are many reasons why our views may differ upon that subject," returned Mr. Foss gravely; "and neither of us can claim to discuss it; and an interview, I am afraid, would end the dejected and desolate father made his way slowly back to his hotel, thinking how much surer had been the judgment of his parishioners than his own perceptions, blinded as they were by a great love."

And so, when Mr. Tremaine gained an interview with Mr. Foss, he found him nearly overcome by his accumulated griefs, and already preparing for a return to the quiet country parsonage, within whose walls he longed to hide himself and his sorrows. To the lawyer's proposal that Mr. Foss should meet Madame De Witt, the clergyman shrank in nervous alarm. He was not able to tell him the exact name of his son, nor the name of Jessie May, and I married her, to find out a few months later, that she was not such a woman as an honest man—even if he is rash and bold, wanted, for his wife. Florrie, my pure little priestess—she was not a good woman, and—I left her, and never in all the after years that I wore the fetters my folly had forced on me, did I bear of her until I learned, a year ago, of her death in a foreign country. What I have endured, and suffered, God only knows. It was like a load of iron around my neck—but, thank Heaven, she died and left me chance for hope and happiness, and—yon, my blessed, my precious. Florrie, if you could dought toward changing it."

"But in case," persisted the lawyer, "your daughter returns to her home, or matters prove to be otherwise than they now appear, would you consent that she should make the acquaintance of her mother, and, as Madame De Witt's heiress, spend most, or at least a portion of her time, in the home madame is about to establish in this city?"

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(To be continued—commenced in No. 438.)

#### REJECTED LOVE.

BY W. E. M.

We stood alone by the river side—  
We stood alone us two;  
I fondly hoped she'd be my bride,  
As I love you, I love you!

The river breezes softly fanned  
My flushed and burning brow,  
And the delicate touch of her quivering  
hand—

I almost feel it now.

She neither moved nor said a word  
To break the waking dream;  
I stood in silence most absurd;  
She gazed upon the stream.

At last she spoke: I watched her eyes—  
Her eyes of brilliant blue—

That burned bright with a humorous light  
As she cried, "I don't love you!"

#### One of Life's Histories.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A SOLOTAIRE diamond, in whose fathomless heart gleamed and fretted a thousand prisoned glories of hue, set high in a chased band of gold, and circling a slender brunette fore-finger at which Florence was looking with all her happy heart in her bonny brown eyes.

It meant so much, that ring on her finger. It meant everything, at this time, her, because it represented Ernest Howell's love, because it meant that she was to be Ernest's wife one day.

Such a sweet face Florence was as she stood there in the open window with the June sunlight flooding goldenly about her, bringing out all the satin smoothness of her clear, blonde complexion, all the girlish freshness of her face with its clear brown eyes so happy, so tender, its smiling, sensitive mouth, that was like a crimson rosebud cleft in twain, all the flavor-like grace of her supple, willowy figure.

And so early in her quiet young life her happiness had come to her, and she was so glad, so glad, so perfectly, utterly content that it should be so, for she knew she loved Ernest Howell with genuine love, she knew no one could ever come after him.

Just now, as she stood among the early red June roses that climbed around the window, watching the sunshines that awoke a thousand glorious fires of color under the icy crystal of her diamond, her glad young heart was beating in tumultuous ecstasy, as she tried to realize that Ernest loved her, that Ernest had told her in his grave, intense, painful words that she must be his wife. His wife! His wife! Ernest's wife—and as a gentle, handsome, grave-faced man came up between the flower-beds to the house, watching her with all his heart in his eyes, Florence, with a little shy flush on her face, lifted her eyes in one glance of rapturous delight at sight of him, and then—drew back further into the room.

Ernest came in through the open front door, and went right up to her, smiling down at her.

"You wish I had not come, my darling! Perchance you regret the promise you made me last night?"

He touched her satiny-brown hair in a caressing way that thrilled her only less than his words.

"Regret? Oh, no, no!"

Then, as if shamed by her eager, yet faintly spoken words, she turned her face further away, until he boldly took her in his arms and gently forced her head to his shoulder.

"My precious little girl! Let me hear you say again, this morning, what you said last night. Do you know I could not sleep between happiness that you did say what you did, and fear lest you might wish to retract it this morning? Florrie, my little one, my darling little one!"

He lifted the pure sweet face and kissed it again and over again, on quivering mouth, and drooping eyelids, and warm, flushed cheeks, holding her little shrinking figure close in his embrace.

"After a moment she whispered to him:

"Please—let me go, now!"

He laughed at her sweet, shy, startled look, evoked by his bold, openly manifested delight in her white face, for she slipped away from his embrace, shrinking in his arms, gray with anguish.

He snatched her tightly to him.

"But, as God lives she will not come between us," he said, "and I will not let her go."

"My God spare me! What a awful sin have I ever done! I should suffer this, that she should suffer so!"

She looked at him with whitening lips. What did he mean? Then almost roughly, in his awful grief, he thrust her woe in her face.

"Florence—you are not my wife. God help us! She is not dead, as I thought; she has been here, she saw your father, she saw me, she laughed in my face, she declared her readiness, her intention to live with me again, she—"

There was no need to go on; that one first sentence had almost killed her, and she stood, shivering, shrinking in his arms, gray with anguish.

"I will have no answer save the mortal anguish in her white face, for she slipped away from his embrace, shrinking in his arms, unconscious.

Such a terrible year followed after that wed-

ding-day, that was no wedding-day, when Ernest Howell had kissed his sore-stricken love a good-by that would have been less hard to do had she been sleeping in her coffin, since he had gone away feeling that a curse worse than Cain's was set upon him, since that day Florence had taken up the strangely-altered burden of her grievous young life into which no joy could even come now that Ernest Howell had gone out of it.

Where he had gone, he had never known, but he never asked, never knew until, one day, after the day Jessie May Howell had come into her life, there came a penciled scrawl to Florence announcing the near demise of the woman who had once before been thought dead.

"Come and look at me," the note said. "Come and make sure I die this time. Once I had my revenge on Ernest Howell through you; now come and take your revenge by satisfying yourself that I am past all possibility of annoying you."

And Florence went, trying not to be thankful, so sore afraid of triumphing over this woman's extremity—wrote, and saw with her own eyes the passing to judgment of her who had wrecked Ernest Howell's life.

Then, a little later, she took especial means to learn where her lover had gone, and wrote to him a long, explanatory letter, full of exquisite sweetness and yearning tenderness, bidding him come to her whenever he thought best.

Then she waited, not for the personal reply—waited for

nothing, nothing which can make me—not love you."

His voice qu

"Not yet, sir; do you see those cliffs?" and the youth pointed to the overhanging rocky walls of the channel.

"Yes; what of them?"

"Did you search them when you were here before?"

"No, there was no means of reaching them."

"You are mistaken, sir. Upon the right cliff the pilot beacon that guided you last night was lighted."

"You are right. Well, what of that?"

"Both of those cliffs are mounted heavy guns."

"Impossible! boy, you cannot frighten by threats."

"I tell you the truth, sir—there is a strong armament up there, and brave men to man the guns."

"Nonsense."

"Captain Markham, I will prove my words; lend me your trumpet."

The boy took the speaking-trumpet and hollered:

"Ho! the cliff!"

"Ay, ay—on board the Sea Hawk!" came back from the top of the cliff.

"Send a broadside against yonder wooded hill!" again shouted the boy.

Instantly there flashed forth from the summits of both of the cliffs a dozen bursts of red flame, and a dozen roarers resounding, while as many iron messengers sped howling above the topmasts of the Sea Hawk, and went crashing into the timber upon the hill-side.

Every face on that deck then paled. No, there were two that flushed—the youth's with pride, at proving his power. Mabel's with hope that Rafael would yet go free.

"Boy, you have spoken the truth; but those guns are for vessels coming into the basin."

"You are mistaken, sir. They command the Sea Hawk where she now is, and can send a plunging fire upon her as she runs out of the channel and keep her in range for half a league. Will you release Rafael and his men now?"

"I will not; I will run the gauntlet going out, and coming up to the yard-arm a dozen of your ville crew to meet me in earnest."

But the youth was not daunted by the savage threat; for he quickly replied:

"Captain Markham, you lost a favorite lieutenant some time since?"

"Do you refer to Bancroft Edmunds?" asked the officer, eagerly.

"I do, sir."

"Know you aught of him?"

"Yes."

"Is he alive?"

"He is."

"Where?"

"On the island, and in the power of the buccaneers."

"Good God! can this be true?"

"It is true; and that if harm befalls Captain Rafael, the life of Bancroft Edmunds shall at once be forfeit."

Captain Markham dropped his head. The youth again held the vantage.

"Would you do this crime?" he suddenly asked.

"Ay, would I! If Rafael the Rover dies, Lieutenant Edmunds' death shall follow in the same manner! I swear it, Captain Markham."

"The one is an outlaw—a cruel corsair—the other an honored officer of the navy of the United States!"

"They both are men; life is as dear to one as to the other. Will you exchange prisoners, Captain Markham? for I now hold the winning hand."

"No, sir; that is, I will take my men and rescue poor Edmunds."

"And I will give the signal to have the Sea Hawk sink where she lies! Will you exchange prisoners, I again ask, sir?"

"I will not, sir."

"Then it shall be a *life for a life*."

Captain Markham was silent; he felt that he was in a trap, and he knew not what to say.

A seaman approached at this moment and said:

"The Rover asks to see you, sir—"

"Bring him here," and then turning to Lieutenant Redmond he said, in a low tone:

"We are in a scrape, Redmond."

"Yes, sir; but the buccaneer should not escape."

"But poor Edmunds?"

"Even if he dies, sir, the Rover should not escape."

Lieutenant Redmond is anxious for promotion at any cost; he would step into Lieutenant Edmunds' shoes."

It was Mabel who spoke in cold, sneering tones, and her words cut deep, for Ross Redmond had made up his mind to try and win the maiden for himself.

The youth heard the remarks, and a smile on his lips proved that he appreciated the situation.

At this moment two marines approached, Rafael the Rover, heavily ironed, walking proudly between them.

"Captain Markham, through the open hatch-way I heard all that has passed, and I came up to see if I could not arrange a compromise, but Rafael glanced fixedly at the youth, a strange light in his eyes.

The youth met the look, blushed like a young girl, and bent down his gaze.

"What terms would you wish to make at a compromise, Sir Buccaneer?" haughtily said Captain Markham.

"Your vessel is in danger, sir. My island guns, as—this youth has said, command you, and there is force enough on shore, I tell you frankly, to defeat any landing you might attempt to make, while you could not run out of here without a most experienced pilot."

"I will offer my life and gold to any man who will not accept the terms, sir."

"What do you mean to say that your buccaneer crew have such a high sense of honor that they will not accept the terms I offer?"

"It is just what I said, sir. They are below; call them up and try them," indifferently said Rafael.

"By Heaven! I'll do it! Mr. Redmond, have those sea-cutthroats brought on deck," angrily ordered Captain Markham, while Rafael the Rover calmly gazed shrewdly, an unfathomable look in his dark, sad eyes.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

##### THE COMPROMISE.

TEN minutes after the order of Captain Markham the buccaneers were ranged on deck, Roy Woodbridge taking his place near Rafael.

In their faces shone a ray of hope, for they believed all after they had done for the sloop that they might be pardoned.

"Outlaws," began Captain Markham, "your chief has led me into a trap here; his guns command the sloop with plunging shots, and he has a force on shore, and one of my officers in the power of those on the island, so you see he holds a strong advantage, though himself a prisoner."

"Now his crimes, and yours, have made you outlaws on sea and land, and you should not expect mercy; but I am willing to give not only his liberty, but one thousand dollars in gold to the buccaneer who will pilot me out of this basin, for I will give him in spite of the guns on shore. Now who is the man that will accept his offer on such terms?"

The men looked at each other, and none spoke for some minutes; then one asked:

"Do these terms include Captain Rafael and Lieutenant Woodbridge?"

"Your lieutenant can accept the terms, yes—but your chief, no."

Roy Woodbridge smiled a strange smile that those who did not know him could understand.

"Well, speak out, my man—you who will take his life and the gold, for running us into sea."

Yet no answer came, and Captain Markham, his brow darkening, continued:

"There were several of you last night, who told me that this was Rafael, when I believed him to be an American officer—let one of those men speak out."

Still no answer, and the enraged captain cried:

"Am I your only fool that you throw away your lives? What man accepts my terms? You, sir, I make the offer to you, and he turned toward Roy Woodbridge, whose face was filled with hot blood as he quickly retorted:

"And if you were not a villain at heart, sir, you would not thus suspect that I could be so base."

"This to me, sir! You shall rue it."

Roy Woodbridge again smiled, while Rafael spoke up once:

"You may save yourself further entreaty, Captain Markham, or while I admit that those men who betrayed you all know the truth, they might have accepted your liberal offer. I may as well tell you that they could not, if they would."

Lieutenant Woodbridge, there, on the island, alone know this channel—if I except, perhaps, two others. A calm day, with your boats ahead, all these men could not pilot the Sea Hawk to keep from drowning."

"Curses and furies! and why is it you are here?"

"My story is soon told; the tornado swept over us—the Sea Hawk I mean; we were driving directly on the island, and we were released to save the vessel."

"Why, where was my son, man?"

"He was above, too; he directed of course; none other could have brought the vessel in in such a blow and wild sea."

"Released, you say; why, was he discovered?"

"Yes; some of the crew betrayed him as soon

as they came on board, and he was ironed with the rest of us."

"Oh, curses! curses! He will die."

"Yes, he will be taken to Havana," coolly said the Spaniard.

"And you—how did you escape, señor Spaniard?"

"I stood at the wheel with Captain Rafael and Roy Woodbridge, and not wishing to take the chances of being pardoned for our services, I sprung overboard into the sea, as soon as we were in the basin, and swam ashore."

"You were right—why did not Rafael and the others follow your brave example?"

"Captain Rafael is too honorable to be a pirate. He preferred to wait and trust in being pardoned, I suppose," sneered Ramirez.

"That will never be; he will be hung—nay, he will be broken on the wheel, for I have been condemned to that fate—I and my officers, while the men will be *garroted*; but this must not be."

"You say the vessel is now in the basin?"

"The old chief sprung to his feet with nervous energy."

"He is, and by this time Rafael and the crew are again in irons."

"He shall not die—never! Salvador, go to the further cliff, with a crew of a dozen men, to man the guns there. Ramirez, you take as many men with you to the nearer cliff, and see that the guns are ready for immediate action. I will retain the remainder of my band to attack landing-parties, and I'll yet bring Walter Markham to terms. His vessel may sail, but he must remain behind! Though hiding in holes, the Island Buccaneers are not dead yet," and the old chief spoke with a resolution that proved he intended carrying the war to the enemy's very deck.

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THE GOLDEN AGE.

BY A. W. BELLAW.

I think, when looking up to see  
The glimmering sunbeams softly climb,  
That I can catch a glimpse of the Golden Time.

Far off, yet nearer than we know,  
It is, and I still feel, for lo!  
How soft our sunrise grows, of late!

The glories of the time advance,  
And mingle in these kindling morns;  
My eye lights up in sweet belief,  
And cannot doubt what it discerns.

Oh, thousand years of blessed peace!  
Oh, years whose coming is so sweet!  
In which the very paths we tread  
Shall feel the press of angels' feet!

Welcome, and knit these broken hearts;  
Welcome, and change these severing hates;  
And of the many make but one  
In this sad world that weeping waits.

Typical Women.

ISABELLA OF CASTILE.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

All the spirit of a chivalrous age, all the romance of military adventure and knightly prowess, all the gorgeous magnificence of medieval royalty, all the ducy of castilian pride and the gentle grace of feminine loveliness, gathered around the person of Isabella. With the spiritual endowments of England's Elizabeth and the beauty and accomplishments of Mary Stuart, she was free from the harshness of the one, and the weakness of the other. Her lofty pride was blended with the sweetest womanly softness and engaging charms. Her haughty willfulness was tempered by generous goodness, and her piety, bordering on bigotry, was redeemed by the purity of her self-devotion. She was indeed what she was called by her people: "the Isabella of peace and goodness." She was a pure and admirable woman; she was a gracious and benign sovereign. History does not present a more interesting character; and her history is inseparably linked with events of such magnitude, as to involve the whole world in their consequences.

She was the daughter of John II., King of Castile and Leon, and was born in 1450. At the death of John, he was succeeded by Don Henry, his son by the first marriage, who endeavored to control his sister Isabella's choice of a husband. But she was then nineteen years old, and had already betrothed herself to Don Ferdinand, the son of the King of Aragon. They were married privately at Valladolid, and the young Ferdinand showed a vigor of mind and promptitude of action that would enable him to defend himself and his bride from the aggressions of tyranny. His selfish and unprincipled ambition was not as yet developed.

Isabella had the advantage of rare personal loveliness, with grace and dignity of deportment, great firmness of purpose, a genius for wise government, and pure nobility of soul. Her masculine energy was tempered with exquisite tenderness and sensibility of heart. Her nobles, dissatisfied with King Henry, wished to make her queen; but she refused, even though her half-brother, offended at her marriage, excluded her from the succession. On his death in 1474, she was proclaimed Queen of Castile, her husband having his share of the sovereignty. He commanded the army in the civil contest that followed, till all military was put down; and not long after, Ferdinand became King of Aragon. The two kingdoms of Castile and Leon were thus united forever. The question of precedence in titles was at first settled by the firmness of Isabella, who would not yield the dignity of her kingdom, even to the husband who possessed her love. It was decided that the titles of Castile and Leon should precede those of Aragon and Sicily.

The war of Granada was the first event of importance that occurred under the joint sway of Ferdinand and Isabella. It seems like turning the pages of a splendid romance to dwell on the record of this war. The beautiful country possessed by the Moors, a mere strip about seventy miles in breadth between the mountains and the sea, and one hundred and eighty miles along the south of Spain; its populous cities and wealthy, warlike population; its royal capital in the center of the Vega or Plain of Granada; its rich cultivation and luxuriance of tropical fruits; its range of snow-capped mountains on the side and the blue Mediterranean on the other, pouring in the treasures of Africa and the Levant; its glorious palace of the Alhambra, and the passionate love of its nobles for their terrestrial Paradise; all are celebrated in the glowing poetry, so much of which has been made familiar to us. The sweet and melancholy ballads of Andalusia are still extant. Still the echoed plaint—*"Ay di me, Alhama!"* touches the heart. At this period the Moorish power was on the decline; but the brave people were yet ready to die in the defense of their homes, their faith and their beloved country.

We have no space to dwell on the details of this conquest. The strong town of Alhama was the first to fall. Four Castilian nobles were distinguished for their exploits, whose names figure in poetry and romance. These were the Don de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz; Don Alfonso de Aguilar; the Count de Cabra; and the Duke of Medina Sidonia. These were feudal sovereigns, and commanded each an army of retainers. In every campaign Isabella was present, animating her husband and his generals by her courage; providing for the necessities of the army and comforting the leaders under reverses; her pious confidence in Heaven, and her benevolent sympathy, and kindness to friend and foe, going hand in hand. She appointed surgeons paid out of her own purse, to attend the army, and furnished movable hospitals for the sick and wounded. The numerous battles, victories and reverses, have been chronicled in one of the most brilliant pens in literature.

At the close of the eventful campaign of 1483 that Isabella, having retired from the seat of war, gave birth to her third daughter, the Infanta Catherine, of Aragon, who became the wife of Henry VIII. of England.

Many cavaliers of England, France and Germany, looking on this as a religious war, were eager to distinguish themselves under the eyes of a beautiful and noble queen, and came to serve under Ferdinand's banner at Cordova, Lord Rivers, of England, and Gaston de Laval, of France, were conspicuous among these, and magnificent in their appointments for battlefield or lady's bower. Isabella's court added grace and dignity to this martial camp. Many of the ladies who surrounded her were lovely and eminent in rank; and she was attended by noble ladies of high station and influence. History wears the gorgeous colors of romance in describing this grand assemblage of prelates, nobles and fierce warriors, of high-born dames and beautiful demoiselles. Among these proud and stately dignitaries moved one in humble attire and with unpretending lowliness of deportment. He might have been scorned by lofty ladies, or thrust aside with contempt by the ambitious chiefs on whom they smiled. But he was chosen by the Powers that rule the destinies of nations and individuals to crown Isabella's reign with its greatest glory. His was the greatness that could make a wife while earth remained with the luster of years. His mind had conceived the idea, and his will had determined to carry out the purpose, which gave the name of CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS to the veneration of centuries past and to come; to the grateful admiration of the whole world!

In the spring of 1486 Columbus first ap-

peared as a petitioner in the Court of Castile. He was full of the grand speculation to which he had determined to devote his life. But few took time to listen to him. He met little attention or encouragement; and during the spring and autumn that he lingered at Cordova, though he was patronized by the Cardinal Mendoza, he failed in every effort to obtain an audience. Ferdinand was absorbed in warlike preparation, and Isabella in supplying his armies, in the administration of the revenues, and the complicated affairs of government. The magnificent views of Columbus appeared visionary beside the pressing importance of the martial movements that occupied his whole attention.

Summoned by her husband to his camp at Medina for consultation, Isabella took her departure from Cordova, with a brilliant train, crossing into Granada. The king and grandees rode forth to meet her. "The queen was mounted on a chestnut mule, in a saddle-chair of state; the housings were of fine crimson cloth, embroidered with gold; the reins and headpiece of satin, curiously wrought with needlework. The queen wore a skirt of velvet over petticoats of brocade; a scarlet mantle hung from her shoulders, and her hat was of black velvet embroidered with gold." The ladies of the court, splendidly dressed, followed on forty mules. A Spanish etiquette and gravity marked the meeting of the two sovereigns. The chronicle of the times is full of picturesque incidents, which cannot even be mentioned here.

It was at Salamanca that the plans and projects of Columbus were first laid before a council for consideration. All the obstacles of ignorance and narrow superstition could throw in the way impeded the great navigator. Columbus again joined the court of Isabella before Malaga, which city stood a siege of more than three months. The expenses of the suitor were on this occasion defrayed from the royal treasury. Still time was lacking for the consideration of his plans; the issue of a tremendous war hung in the balance; and the clash and din of arms, and the perils and anxieties of battle and conquest drowned every voice that promised the discovery of a distant world.

The campaign of 1488 was short and less brilliant. Isabella spent the winter at Saragossa and Valladolid, managing the domestic affairs of her kingdom, and superintending the education of her children. The Infanta Isabella and Don Juan were her companions. Joanna was subject to fits. Catherine, the youngest daughter, was at this time demanded in marriage by Henry VII. for his son, Prince Arthur. Isabella was obliged, during the following year, in addition to the cares of government, to provide supplies for the army, then in the enemy's country. The energy and activity of her mind, her talents and her indomitable perseverance, were all tasked to overcome the difficulties in her way. The contractor agreed to undertake the conveyance of supplies over the difficult mountain passes. Isabella constructed new roads and hired fourteen thousand mules; yet she did not opprively tax her people. The treasures of prelates and convents were offered; she pledged her own plate and borrowed from wealthy men. To her activity, judgment and enterprise, the chroniclers ascribe the success of the war. After the siege of Baza had lasted seven months, she took up her residence in the camp with all her retinue. Her presence so dismayed the Moors that they shortly after surrendered, in December, 1489.

In the following spring the sovereigns were at Seville, where the Infanta Isabella had married to the Prince of Portugal. Columbus again petitioned for aid in his enterprise, and was referred to a board of inquiry. These "scientific men" reported his scheme as vain and impossible; and advised the sovereigns by no means to engage in the enterprise. Ferdinand de Talavera took part strongly against the navigator; yet he was not entirely dismissed. A hope was held out that after the conclusion of the war, the negotiation might be renewed.

But Columbus was heartsickened by this "hope deferred." Weary and disgusted by his long and fruitless attendance on the court, he had lost confidence in the indefinite promises of princes. In indignant disappointment he quitted Seville. At that time the king and queen were raising the army for the effort expected to terminate the war—the siege of Granada. While bent on terminating their conquest little did they think they were letting slip an opportunity of gaining deathless fame by the acquisition of a new world!

Once more Isabella was a resident of the camp before Granada. It was the last hope of the Moors to defend their beloved city, the destruction of which would blot them out as a nation. It was the last campaign of the Christian sovereigns. Many were the romantic exploits and heroic deeds, of which the beautiful Plain was the scene. Isabella had her full share of peril. In the camp before Malaga, her life had been nearly brought to a tragic close by a Moorish fanatic who pretended to be a prophet, and promised to reveal the secrets of fate, if conducted to the presence of the king and queen. He had mistaken for them a noble and a lady playing at chess. At Granada a Moorish chief made a sally from the walls with some followers, galloped up to the Christian camp, leaped the entrenchments, flung his lance into the midst of the royal tents, recrossed the barriers, and galloped back to the city. His lance, found quivering in the ground, was labeled with the name of Queen Isabella.

The whole host of Christians were so indignant at this bravado, that a Castilian knight swore to retort on the enemy. He forced his way through one of the gates, and galloped to the principal mosque; of which, kneeling down, he took possession in the name of the Virgin. He named a tablet inscribed "Ave Maria" to the portal with his dagger, sprang on his horse, and fighting his way through all opposition, regained the camp in safety.

The next day Isabella and her daughters and retinue were conducted by the Marquis of Cadiz, accompanied by a powerful escort, to a rising ground near the city, where they could see the glorious Alhambra. The Moors, noticing their approach, sent out a body of young men to challenge them; but the queen forbade the combat. Then the Christians saw the fierce chief who had sent the lance into the royal tents, dragging at his horse's tail the label, "Ave Maria"—and insolently parading himself before them. The Castilians could not bear the insult. One of them threw himself at the queen's feet, obtained her permission, and charged on the foe with fury. The Moorish insulter was slain, and the fray became general. Isabella, shocked and terrified, threw herself on her knees in prayer, and her lackeys did the same.

The Moors were driven back with great loss.

On another occasion, one sultry night in July, while the queen was in her oratory, by carelessness of an attendant, the silken curtains of her pavilion took fire from a taper. The flames spread from tent to tent. The queen, extricating herself with difficulty from the burning curtains, flew to her husband and son. In this fire the queen's rich wardrobe was destroyed, with a large quantity of arms and treasure. The Moors from their walls saw the fire, and were astonished when they saw built the noble city on the ruins of the camp: the city erected by Isabella in pious gratitude for her preservation. This city she named La Santa Fe.

While this city was building, Isabella sent again to Columbus, requesting his return for further conference; and sent him a mule, garments to wear in her presence, and a sum of money for his expenses. By the time he obeyed this royal summons, Granada had surrendered; the standard of the Cross and the great banners of Castile were floating on the lofty watch-tower of the Alhambra. The sovereigns entered the city on the 6th of January, 1492. Thus closed the war of ten years, terminating the dominion of the Moors in Spain, which had endured not far from eight hundred years.

Again the negotiation with Columbus was

renewed. But many and powerful were his enemies. Talavera, Archbishop of Granada, opposed him so stoutly that the queen at last decided against him. Columbus departed in bitterness of spirit. But two of his friends pleaded for him with such zeal, that Isabella listened, and at length exclaimed: "I will do it! I will undertake the enterprise for my own kingdom of Castile! I will pledge my jewels to raise the money."

Ferdinand had coldly refused his aid from the first. Isabella became the patron of this mighty discovery!

A courier from the queen overtook Columbus, and brought him back to Santa Fe. The contract was signed in April, 1492.

On the navigator's return from America he was received in state at Barcelona, and laid at the queen's feet the fruits he had brought from the New World. Isabella took a tender interest in the welfare of the natives, described by him. She opposed the system of enslaving the Indians, and released the prisoners brought to her country. Her generous heart and upright mind revolted from cruelty toward them on any pretext.

In the meantime Ferdinand had gratified his ambition by securing the kingdom of Naples, which was caused to offer a series of domestic calamities, under which no prosperity could console her. The death of her mother was followed by that of her only son, the young prince Juan; her favorite daughter, Isabella, Queen of Portugal, died, leaving a puny boy to the care of her mother; and in a short time this infant, the heir of many kingdoms, also pined away and perished. Crushed to earth by her grief, the queen still endeavored to do justice between the two sons.

The ladies of the court, splendidly dressed, followed by their husbands, received him with a tender interest. Catherine, the youngest daughter, was at this time demanded in marriage by Henry VII. for his son, Prince Arthur. Isabella was

of the clothing was bundled into the vehicle, and then the horse was untied from the fence.

"We've got her this time, sure," chuckled Brant. "I wish you joy of your wedding-trip, Bill! Don't let her take cold. Good-by."

"You'll need me in Chicago, you say?"

"Yes, I'll be there on Saturday—at the Palmer House."

By this time the girl began to gasp and throw out her arms; Alexander touched the animal lightly with a whip, and off he started down the road, quickly disappearing around a turn.

Ben Brant stood a few moments looking after the buggy had been lost to sight; the large calm stars shone down in cold surprise; the moist air was full of the delicious perfume of fields and wayside flowers; perhaps some feeling of remorse for the part he had played toward his own child touched and stung his hardened heart, for he drew a deep sigh before he muttered:

"Blast it! I don't exactly like kidnapping my own daughter! She could have been had herself out! She's married to him, still a virgin, however; so that makes it all right. I had to stick to my promise to Alexander. We'll both of us be rich as blazes now. There's nothing to prevent it. She'll learn to like him when she gets used to him. She's a splendid girl and she'll have a splendid home, and, too, she'll find that Ben Brant can be kind to her. I'm just proud to be her father, and if I don't show it, it'll be her fault. But now I must make my way back to the station. There's a freight-train stops to water at two o'clock; I'll board that; a half-eagle will make it all right with the train-hands."

"I reckon, if Bill brings his wife to terms, that I'd better drop Esther like a hot potato, and hurry on to Chicago. All I want is a girl. I don't care for Esther. Esther—it still lets me alone, and I've no time to fool away with her. I'd have to stop and be witness if I had her arrested. Of course that was all gamblers to scare her into doing what I wanted! In fact, I wouldn't venture to accuse her. They'd say I was the man who was the prisoner, once for that murder; that I was the only one who was to be made dead; that I was the first to be tried for that murder; that I was the first to be convicted for that murder."

"Let her go. She's got a good scare. I'll meet Bill at the Palmer House, and we'll go on to California together. Mercy will be glad to behave herself before that. She'll be meek as a lamb, once she gives up that she's his wife!"

Ben had begun his walk to the station during his soliloquy. He meant to take the freight-train and be far from the village before the inmates of the farm-house awoke to the discovery that something had happened while they were asleep.

"Man proposes, but God disposes." There were other persons awake and out on mysterious errands that starlit night. If there was a plot working against the innocent, there was also a trap being set to catch a fox.

Ben Brant had not traversed half the way back to the station when he was surprised to see three men coming along the road. He was surprised because he had a guilty conscience, and the hour was an unusual one for people to be abroad. As he would have passed them, they were stopped; a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder.

"What's this?" cried Ben, with an oath, pulling revolver from his breast.

"Name o' that!" cried the one whose hand clutched him. "I arrest you, Antonio Delgado, as an escaped prisoner, accused of the murder of Thomas Cleveland in the year 1857. Keep quiet a bit, and I'll read you the warrant."

A fierce oath came hissing from between Brant's teeth.

So, by visiting this place again, he had been recognized! Here was a pretty scrape! His immense interests in Nevada were suffering from his absence. He was in a great hurry to return, and here he was—a prisoner, with the prospect of months spent in a country jail!

His thoughts, for the present, went no further than that. Imprisonment was bad enough, under any circumstances. He did not ask himself if there was any more serious danger.

"I'll have to blow on Esther," was what he thought.

He would make an effort to escape. He went on quietly until they neared the railroad crossing just out of the village. There, by a sudden spring, he attempted to throw off his captors; but they were on their guard, and his *ruse* did not succeed.

"Come, no more of that," and the sheriff clapped a pair of handcuffs about his wrists.

"You're mistaken in your man, and I'll make you pay for this," threatened the prisoner. His name was Benjamin Brant. I am just from Frisco—over on East to tend to some mining interests. I am about to buy out the hull of this prairie State, an' he'll be sorry who makes my mistake o' coolin' me up!"

"We will see about that when your examination takes place. If you are the wrong man there will be no great harm done; and if you're the right man we shall want to keep you."

"Who says I'm—I'm that other chap?"

"One of our citizens thought he recognized you as soon as you stepped off the cars. He kept an eye on you, and when he found you hanging about the very farm-house, just as you did in '57, he was sure of his man. What have you been doing out here at this time of night, anyhow?"

Brant had no reply to this leading question. He silently hoped that Alexander would be out of Connecticut before morning with the fair companion of his ride.

It had been the idea of the two conspirators that if Mercedes could be kept in Alexander's company through that long, lonely ride, her womanly pride and care for her good name would make her willing to consent to have the marriage ceremony repeated, since she denied being a party to the first.

It was a cruel mode of forcing her into a marriage she detested; but Ben Brant had no mercy where his own interests were at stake.

His punishment was coming upon him rather quickly. Things were not turning out, as far as he was concerned, at all as he had anticipated.

To be in the hands of a sheriff, to have his wrists taken from him, to be locked in an uncomfortable cell in the same jail from which he had once escaped, were scenes not set down in the programme he had arranged.

No sleep visited his busy brain the brief remainder of the night. He spent the hours in alternately cursing his luck and deciding on the plan of his defense.

Two courses were open to him. To deny that he was Antonio Delgado, in the hope that he could not be proved, was one course. To confess that he was that personage, and tell the true story of the murder, was the other.

He would not have hesitated on Esther's account to pursue the first course; but he had no idea his story would be believed unless Esther made some confession.

Henry confessed that the lady's reasons for breaking off the match were insuperable—that she was bound in honor to have done so—that his father would soon be glad to have escaped the marriage.

But when the earl, angry, bitterly disappointed, ordered his son to return to England with him, he could successfully deny his identity with Delgado; he might be discharged at once, with only a few hours' detention.</

"Madame?" answered the startled girl.  
"It was a jest," said her mistress, with a bitter, reckless laugh. "Now, Rosine, I must be off, or the one I desire to meet at Mrs. Livingstone's will have left there. Wait up for me; I shall not be long away."

The other ladies who hovered about the hostess took on a faded look when Esther Silverman presented herself. Her always splendid beauty was, to-night, more than merely splendid. The despair, love, anguish at her heart, shone through, not suffering, but at rest, and superb expression and control. The rose on her cheek was warm, the fire in her eyes dazzling.

"Very poor taste of her to wear white satin, richer than mine!" complained the bride.

Esther had no thought of outshining the new-made wife. She wore her best, but it was that Gascoigne might see her in it!

As soon as possible, she encouncoed herself in a deep window-seat, and, from her nook beheld the earl moving restlessly from room to room, evidently in search of her.

Her eyes fed on his grave, sad face; her spirit rose in protest against her own unhappy fate. Why should she not be wife?

The gay, softly-sounding, softly-repeating strains of the delicious dance measures almost made her head a-daze, so wrought to almost frenzy did she grow, gazing at the one she loved, knowing that happiness had slipped out of her grasp. Over and over to herself she murmured some verses that floated to the surface of her memory, though she knew not how they came there:

"Still that music underneath  
Works to madness in my brain.  
Even the roses seem to breathe  
Poisoned perfumes, full of pain."

"Let me think!—my head is aching  
I have little strength to think;  
And I know my brain is aching;  
Yet here I am, will not shrink!"

"In his look is such sweet sadness,  
As he bends that look on me;  
I am helpless—call it madness,  
Call it guilt—but it must be!"

The sharp darts of pain that shot through Esther's head became more frequent. Once or twice it occurred to her that she was feeling much as she felt that horrible day, so many weary years ago, when her twin-sister died, and—so many other things happened.

Presently the earl, wandering listlessly about, doing his best to appear interested and pleased, for courtesy's sake, felt a strange, magnetic attraction drawing him to a certain part of the back drawing-room; he made his way through ranks of silk and jewels and saw the star-eyes of Esther fixed full upon him.

"Ah, you are here!" he said, tenderly, as soon as he could reach her side. "I have been looking for you so long that I was about to leave in despair."

"Gascoigne!" her low, thrilling voice breathed music into his name.

How beautiful, how faultless she looked! What could there be to set the sex between her and him? How her eyes shone!—dark as night, bright as diamonds.

"Esther," he whispered, bending over her, "you are a beautiful mystery to me! I do not understand why you are here to-night if you and I are to be separated. Take back that cruel message you sent me. Say to me, now, that it was a jest."

"It was no jest, Gascoigne. Something dark and dreadful lies between us. Let me whisper to you what this hideous thing is. *Murder!* My hand is red with blood. Look at it!" she tore off her glove and held up her soft, white, shapely hand, while her glittering eyes searched his face with a curious, intent look.

"You are ill and over-excited, Esther," spoke the earl, beginning to feel uneasy, half-shrinking from her fixed gaze.

"I am ill, Gascoigne. My head aches terribly. I think I shall go mad with the pain."

"Shall I call a carriage? Will you go to the dressing-room?"

"Yes, if you please, Gascoigne!"

She arose to take his offered arm. Perhaps the sudden emotion increased the pain in her head, for she gave a low, sharp scream, and would have fallen had he not caught her.

"She has fainted," he cried, to those about him.

Alas! it was worse than an ordinary fainting-fit. It was just such a deep unconsciousness as that from which she once awoke in the ravings of brain fever.

Finding that she could not be revived, her physician was sent for, and she was placed in her carriage and taken home under his care. But though the congestion had partially passed away, Esther was in a high fever, and delirious.

Faithful Rosine put away her lady's jewels and satin robe, and went to her bedside to watch patiently over her.

"Miss Mercedes ought to be here," she said to Mephistopheles, "but I do not know where she is, or how to find her."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 431.)

#### A THRUSH'S SONG.

BY ERN E. STILLMAN.

I saw a wee bird swinging, swinging,  
Close by the wild, wild bush;  
A brown, wild thrush;  
And beneath him the ripples brake.  
I heard this glad bird singing, singing;  
And his song was long and clear;  
So freighted with joy,  
With naught to eloy,  
As he sung it behind the mere.  
And through my heart went ringing, ringing,  
A beautiful, tender strain,  
The three song song;  
The music A-music.  
Or the tinkling of summer rain.  
Then went the brown bird winging, winging  
Away to the flushing w<sup>st</sup>;  
Oh! a maiden fair  
Is waiting there—  
Ah! why sing the song in my breast?

#### Wild Will,

#### THE MAD RANCHERO, OR, THE TERRIBLE TEXANS.

A Romance of Kit Carson, Jr., and Big Foot Wallace's Long Trail.

BY "BUCKSKIN SAM."  
(MAJOR SAM S. HALL.)

#### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THE MAD AVENGER.

As Big Foot and his party were riding through the ford, the Tonkaway was just running his scalping-knife around the head of the last Indian, in the death ring about the tree, when he was grasped from behind by the huge black bear which had previously played a part in the death of the Comanches.

Raven knew in an instant the fix he was in, as the huge jaws clasped about him, and by a sudden effort brought himself about to face the beast before the powerful claws met too closely across his breast.

With another desperate struggle, in which his sinews were stretched to their utmost tension, he succeeded, being on the edge of the bank, in throwing himself and the bear over the brink, and the two rolled over and over down into the water, the knife of Raven being driven between the animal's ribs to the hilt, as often as the Indian could get room to swing his arm.

Both rolled down and disappeared beneath the dark waters, in plain view of Big Foot and his party, as they were in the river crossing.

"Waal," shouted Big Foot, in an excited and

astonished manner, "if this don't beat the devil! What in their name of Crockett, are cum' in next? It's a danged queer time for her Tonk to be b'ar-huntin', but I reckon by ther way things looks ther b'ar war a-huntin' ther Tonk. That animal must be an old 'quaintance an' he's a mighty fectionate cuss; he's soft on ther red, an' heavy on the hug. Look a-ther boys by the way that water 'er lookin' like a m'le' of a' m'le' family, but ther drin kinder chese off ther m'le' I ain't at all skeered 'bout ther Tonk he'll fall off' grit an' game till ther last. Rockon that bear 'll never have round another bee-tree. Hurra! That's our Tonk! just a claw-in' ther bank down below than, and yer can just bet that b'ar are fish-bait by that. Cum on, boys; our horses 'll get chilled; it ar' time we war t'other side."

"Sure, Mister Big Foot," exclaimed Larry, in a terrified manner, "I'm thinkin' it's meself that'll go back beyond to the ranch. I'm not at all well; am not used to sayin' such heathenish things, as I have seen this night. I'm thinkin' I can't stand with a m'le' as big as Big Foot, or it's a fool I want to ever have could Ireland. How far does the likes of ye call it to the salt say, from this beast of a place? Sure, I'm famished fur fude, an' dyin' fur shape; but I clu'd nather ate nor rist wid sich murtherin' sights about me."

"Waal, Larry," said Big Foot, a broad grin overspreading his face, "make a blue streak breakin' through my brain-box," he said, with a smile at boys.

"I let me think!—my head is aching  
I have little strength to think;  
And I know my brain is aching;  
Yet here I am, will not shrink!"

"In his look is such sweet sadness,  
As he bends that look on me;  
I am helpless—call it madness,  
Call it guilt—but it must be!"

"Still that music underneath  
Works to madness in my brain.  
Even the roses seem to breathe  
Poisoned perfumes, full of pain."

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Stanhope he might have had hopes of making her Mrs. Craig. And it was this friendship which secured young Wells his position.

"He was also personally acquainted with Dr. Wells and often him with Col. Stanhope. He knows the latter to have had the *reputation*, at least, of being a bachelor, and consequently not likely to have a son whom he would recognize and associate with his daughter, whose le-

"All of which very good so far as it goes," interrupted Felix, impatiently. "But, sir, your premises are rather shaky."

"Waiving that, then, suppose it were to be established that the Egbert of our acquaintance bears a striking resemblance to the lamented Dr. Wells, while Adele—"

"Miss Stanhope, if you please?"

"I beg your pardon! While *Miss Stanhope* as strongly resembles the gallant colonel, the brother and sister having some features in common, would it not appear that the link was through the mother?"

"How recently has Mr. Craig seen the brother and sister?"

"The former not for nineteen years—the latter never."

"Then how can he tell whom they resemble?"

"I am the fortunate possessor of a daguerreotype of the individuals."

"You have a likeness of Miss Stanhope? How did you come possessed of it? I demand it, sir, instantly!"

"All in good time. If you wish it after it has answered its purpose, you shall have it."

"But how did you get it?"

"I was shrewd enough to foresee this exigency, not to mention a predilection for the original of the effigy, and, let us say, confiscated it! Now, sir, I purpose to submit this daguerreotype to the examination of the ancient lover; and you will have the benefit of his unbiased judgment."

"When can we see this gentleman?"

"Immediately."

"Very well, sir; I attend you. Lead the way."

Felix got his hat.

"My son, may I not accompany you?" asked Mrs. Cornish.

"Mother, you may trust me now. However this eventuates, I am determined to see the pain of Egbert Stanhope's heart!"

"M. Bourdoine, as you have been present during the whole of this affair, I shall be glad of your company, if agreeable to you."

"Merci! (thanks) my friend. Pray command me."

The gentlemen went out together, and fifteen minutes later entered the office of the cotton-broker.

"Are Messrs. Craig & Harney in?" asked Long Jack of the messenger-boy in the outer office.

"Mr. Craig is in his private office," was the reply. "Mr. Harney has not yet returned from the Exchange."

"Conduct us to Mr. Craig."

MR. PAUL HARNEY.

The boy led the way through to an inner office where sat a man of perhaps fifty years of age. There was a stoop in his shoulders, so that he never held his head erect. He looked out from under his brows with restless eyes; and, in his eyes there was a shade of melancholy or regret.

"Mr. Craig," said Long Jack, when they had been courteously received and seated, "allow me to introduce myself as John Boardman, and my friends—"

"Excuse me," interrupted Felix, haughtily.

"For myself *not* your friend!"

Mr. Craig started in mild surprise.

Long Jack laughed lightly, to mask the real annoyance he felt.

"A designation of no importance," he said. "These gentlemen are Mr. Cornish, of Memphis, and M. Bourdoine—a cosmopolite, I take it."

Mr. Craig acknowledged the introduction, and for the development of the business of his unexpected guests.

"Mr. Craig," began Jack, "I must ask you to go back twenty years to a messenger-boy named Charles J. Wells. Did you employ such a one?"

Mr. Craig started and turned slightly pale.

"Yes," he replied.

"He was convicted of forgery as set forth in these papers published at that time?"

Long Jack laid the papers before the broker.

"He was so convicted," admitted Mr. Craig, compressing his lips, as if in pain.

"And branded in the palm with the letter F, the rigor of the law being executed upon him because of his obstinate refusal to betray his accomplices or give any clew to the money?"

"Yes, sir."

"In consequence of which not a penny was ever recovered?"

"Now, sir, was recovered, except what was found on his person."

"Now, sir, you were intimately acquainted with the mother of the boy Wells?"

Again a shadow of pain flitted across the face of the old gentleman. He seemed to struggle a moment; then he said:

"May I ask the purpose of these questions, sir?"

"It is my wish to fix the identity of the boy, now grown to manhood, and to prevent his imposing upon an honorable family whom he is now seeking to deceive."

After a moment Mr. Craig said:

"I knew his mother."

"And her first husband, Dr. Wells?"

"I was acquainted with him for years."

"So subsequently married Colonel Stanhope?"

"Yes."

"Were you acquainted with him, so that you remember his personal appearance?"

"Perfectly."

"Do you know anything of the Stanhopes subsequent to this marriage? Was there any offspring?"

"She had a daughter."

"Named—"

"Adele."

"Good!" cried Jack, radiantly. "We are getting on better than I expected. Now, sir, do you know whether Colonel Stanhope had a son by any marriage previous to his union with Mrs. Wells?"

"He was a bachelor, sir."

"The boy Wells was confined in prison two years?"

"Yes."

"What became of him after that?"

"I know nothing further of him."

"You do not know whether he lived in the house of his step-father?"

"No, Colonel Stanhope left New Orleans about the time the boy's term in prison expired."

"To go North?"

"I do not know. I have lost all track of him and his family for seventeen years."

"Now, sir, can you give us any idea what sort of man Dr. Wells was?"

"He was tall and of commanding presence, with dark hair and eyes, straight nose, firm mouth, and a chin indicative of resolution."

"Was he a man calculated to influence women strongly?"

"I believe that he owed much of his professional success to his magnetic power over the opposite sex."

"Thank you. Can you now describe Colonel Stanhope?"

"He was the antipodes of Dr. Wells. He was much smaller, with light hair and blue eyes. He lacked the dignity of the other man, but was so full of stirring, vigorous life that he too easily impressed his will upon others."

"Excuse me for trespassing on your patience so long. I am nearly done. Lastly, what sort of a woman was Mrs. Wells, afterward Mrs. Stanhope?"

"A change passed over Mr. Craig's face. He cleared his throat, as if to relieve that constriction caused by painful memories. He drew his silk handkerchief across his eyes and forehead, and then rubbed it in his hands.

When he spoke, his voice was low, with a certain degree of tenderness.

"She was a woman of exquisite gentleness, all of whose life was in her love," he said.

Felix thought of Adele, and could hardly repress a groan.

"In person," pursued the old man, with a far-away look in his eyes, as if he were far away in his recollection conjured up before him—"in person she was remarkable for delicacy, elegance, refinement. I don't know that I make myself clear; but there are women who in dress and demeanor impress one as the impersonation of a poem. She was to humanity what Parian marble is to art."

But here the old gentleman suddenly checked himself and actually blushed faintly. Strangers could have little sympathy with his heart-pictures.

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," he said. "Of course you have only to do with her physical appearance. She was rather small, with brown hair of a medium shade, and gray eyes."

"Sir, your descriptions have more than met my expectation," said Long Jack.

"He introduced from his pocket a daguerreotype, of the style common two years ago. Opening it, he screened half the likeness, holding a piece of paper over it, leaving revealed the picture of Adele Stanhope.

At sight of this Felix trembled with anger and pain, and could scarcely restrain his impulse to snatch it from Long Jack's hands.

"What do you think of that picture?" asked the gambler, extending it toward Mr. Craig.

The old gentleman wiped his spectacles and gazed at it in silence, until his eyes grew humid.

"Is it *her* daughter?" he asked, in a low tone.

"Yes. Does it resemble her?"

"In expression, yes. There is all the gentleness and sensitiveness. Physically she is as much a reproduction of the father as the difference of sex would permit. She has her features exactly reflected."

"Now, sir, what do you think of this?"

And Long Jack drew the paper from before Egbert, who was represented seated, while Adele leaned with her peculiar grace on his shoulder.

"It is her boy," said the old man, in a tone of sadness.

"He is the image of his father at that age. She would never be convinced of his guilt; and perhaps it was better so; it would have killed her to believe him unworthy.

"I give to few of us to be loved as she loved!"

And the sigh that arose to his lips was only partially repressed.

"It is her boy," said the old man, in a tone of sadness.

"We need no longer trespass upon your time. You have done me a service which I cannot hope to repay."

But here the office-boy struck his head in at the door and said:

"Mr. Harney, sir."

A strange smile came to Long Jack's lips, but instantly disappeared.

## CHAPTER XXI.

MR. PAUL HARNEY.

In the doorway stood a man of perhaps fifty years of age. There was a stoop in his shoulders, so that he never held his head erect. He looked out from under his brows with restless eyes; and, in his eyes there was a shade of melancholy or regret.

"Mr. Craig," said Long Jack, when they had been courteously received and seated, "allow me to introduce myself as John Boardman, and my friends—"

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Craig—"my partner, Mr. Harney. The gentlemen are Mr. Boardman and M. Bourdoine."

"Conduct us to Mr. Craig."

MR. PAUL HARNEY.

The boy led the way through to an inner office where sat a man of perhaps fifty years of age. There was a stoop in his shoulders, so that he never held his head erect. He looked out from under his brows with restless eyes; and, in his eyes there was a shade of melancholy or regret.

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## SOME RHYM'S BOILED DOWN.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

It's so hot that it well might be felt;  
Indeed, it is warmer than felt,  
Cucumbers no longer are cool,  
And your best endevours,  
The temperate zone has lifted up north,  
The temperate zone has slid out,  
Defaulters weaken and run off,  
And the chills are no longer about.

Human races are had things to run—  
Most surely in such a straight heat,  
Oh, for a cool cell in jail,  
With a coolies pleat and eat!  
Two or three times have got loose,  
And are playing the mischief to-day;  
It's as warm as a fresh cup of tea,  
And hotter than pepper, they say.

Cold marble statues perspire,  
And wooden Indians shrink,  
And family portraits take off  
The heat, and only blink.  
The coolest dead beat in the town  
Can warm without hugging the fire;  
You find all your old flames renewed  
Which coldly long since did expire.

You will say that the heat is too thick,  
While another would call it too thin,  
And you will say it is ten times more hot  
Than it ever could be or has been.  
How grateful we'd be if a rival  
Would only cast us in the shade!  
How I wish that I were a gla-  
Diator in some tranquil glade.

You're so hot that you think you have died  
And are getting your promised reward;  
And another's heat is ten times more soft,  
An infliction that a swainly haw.  
There isn't the breath of a breeze;  
Even bellows give up the ghost;  
Your hat doesn't blow off down-street,  
But that is what aggravates most.

The sun's beams are plainly heard fall,  
And you're so hot you don't dare under a shade;  
You must have a color when you hat  
For the purpose of cooling your head.  
The heat is so dense in the street  
That through it I never can walk;  
Your voluminous words have dried up  
Which you'll find when you offer to talk.

You hear nothing at all but dry jokes—  
While others are laughing and admiring,  
And potatoes are fried in the sun  
Which saves the expense of a fire.  
Poets boil over in rhyme  
While the editor gets a stew—  
I find that my ink has dried up,  
And I think I had best dry up, too.

## Tenting in the North Woods;

OR,

## The Chase of the Great White Stag.

BY C. D. CLARK.

IX.

AFTER DUCKS.—HARRY'S LUCKY SHOT.

WHILE these stirring events were passing, were Harry and Little Hand?

The dug-out, under the strokes of the Indian paddle, soon reached a creek a few miles above the camp, and the Indians were there.

The opening from the lake was so narrow that it was with difficulty they could push the dug-out in. Once inside, however, they found them selves in a broad sea of waving flags, rising six or eight feet above the water, with but a narrow channel, through which the creek found its way to the lake. Harry laid out his double barrel and prepared for work, for he knew that it would not be long before the game would be before them.

The silent paddle of the Indian scarcely seemed to stir the surface of the placid creek, while his eyes gazed upon the waving stretch of tall flags before him.

Harry, with his gun laid across his knees, sat facing the bow, when there was a sudden rush of many wings, and up rose a great flock of "butter-balls." They went speeding away up the stream; but thrice the gun cracked, and five of the flock dropped before the discharge.

While the Indian paddled about to pick up the game, Harry inserted another shell and looked about for a shot. He had not long to wait, when, with a loud quack, a great black duck, resplendent with red about the neck and head, came straight at him, and he pulled.

The duck now wheeled and started off at an angle, presenting his side to the hunter's aim, and the second barrel sounded. It was an eighty yard shot, but the duck, striking even at that distance, folded her wings and plunged head foremost into the tall reeds which lined the channel.

"How got it that time?" announced Harry, delighted. "Push the dug-out in there, Little Hand; I want that fellow."

By a great effort the Indian crowded the canoe among the reeds, and reached the duck. As Harry took it in his hand, the Indian rose in the canoe and looked over the tops of the flags. No sooner had he done so when he sunk out of sight, and caught up his own rifle, which lay in the bottom of the boat.

"Load quick!" he whispered. "Maybe we have fight, pooy soon."

Harry slipped back into each barrel of his gun, and brought his bolt round so that he could get at his revolver ready. Scarcely had he done so when he heard the cautious dip of paddles. Then the sound ceased, and peeping through the flags, Harry could make out the dim outlines of a large canoe, lying idly on the water.

"Dey must be near by," said a voice which could only belong to a negro. "I heerd de gun go."

They had put this up this way," declared another voice.

"Dey can't 'pear de day done gone, but I's bound ter find 'em. I don't up on den, deblie dat like me wuk hick'rys. Daze is arter Abe Stanchfield, hot blocks, an' I's in duty bound" to fetch in de skulp of dat Injun and de Irisher."

They knew him now. It was Black Joe, the negro, who had been flogged by Larry.

Had the canoe made two or three strokes ahead they must have seen the place where the dug-out had been pushed into the shore reeds. But their eyes were turned toward a feeder of the creek which ran up into the land for half a mile or more. As they looked they saw a great flock of ducks come sweeping down from that point, evidently frightened, and it decided them. The dip of the paddles was heard and the canoe receded.

The moment the sounds became more faint Little Hand caught the reeds and began to drag the canoe out into the channel. Once there he caught up the paddle and headed the canoe down toward the mouth of the creek. Just as he did that the lock of Harry's gun, which was at full cock, was accidentally discharged, and they heard in the distance an angry cry.

"Take a paddle!" ordered the Indian. "We mus' go fast now."

"I don't like to run," protested Harry; "but there are times when the bravest men must run. Let them chase us on the open lake if they will, and we can meet them there."

By this time they had reached the mouth of the creek and pushed the dug-out through, and under the united strength of the paddles rapidly receded from the shore, when they saw the canoe pushing out of the channel, and they saw that it contained four men. In the bow, using his paddle with giant strength, was Black Joe. "Hole on dar!" he cried. "Want to hab a little conversation wid you."

A loud laugh from Harry was the only reply. "You'd better stop, or it will be the worse for you," cried the old man. "We've got a bone to pick with you."

"What do you want?" demanded Harry.

"Want to talk with you," was answered back. "We can't wait," was the reply. "See you another time."

With yells of rage the villains bent to their paddles, and in spite of the skill of the Indian, aided by the strength of the young man, the large canoe began to gain.

"I cut your heart out, you white man, you mine dat!" screamed the negro.

"Don't you think you'd better catch a fox before you skin him?" said Harry. Then in a lower tone: "Come, Little Hand; I can stop that canoe. Some of them may get hurt, but I don't care so much for that."

"You no kill dem, kill dem, kill dem,"

"Keep her going, then," said Harry. "I'll give them such a start as they never had before."

He took up his rifle, which lay beside that of the Indian in the bottom of the canoe, and taking a small box from his pocket, he extracted a strange-looking cylindrical shell which he inserted in the breech-loader. Then, bringing it slowly to his shoulder, he took careful aim, not at any of the men in the canoe, but at the canoe itself.

He pulled.

They heard a tearing sound as the missile struck the canoe, accompanied by a loud explosion, and a gaping rent showed itself in the side of the canoe, and she began to sink at once.

"Shall I give them another?" asked Harry, as he loaded again.

"No, no; it is enough. See, the canoe sinks!"

He was right. The canoe gave a lurch and the party were seen struggling in the water, uttering cries of terror, and abandoning everything in the mad desire to escape. Guns, ammunition, even that they valued most, were lost in the water, and they were seen swimming rapidly toward the shore.

"We ought to go and knock them on the head," declared Harry, "but we will not do it. I don't think they will trouble us again, Little Hand."

The Indian shook his head, for he knew the vindictive natures of this class of men. But he continued to paddle on, and in half an hour they were at the camp.

"We break camp right away," said Little Hand; "me 'nother place. Dis no good now."

"I think you are right," admitted Harry. "We might probably beat them to the end, but some of us might get hurt, and it would not pay. I wish Abe and Arthur were here."

"They come in soon," declared the Indian. "We pack up now, so be ready."

The tent was struck and divided at once, for it had been made in such a way that it could be divided for carrying purposes. All the other articles for use in the camp were also divided and packed in the same way, and in an hour all was ready. Scarcely was this done when Arthur and the guides came in on a trail, and were puffed with dust saw what had been done.

"We'll change the plan a little," said the guide. "Come around me, and I'll tell you the

guide's sister Mary received a letter by the same train that brought Aubrey's. Hers ran in this wise:

"DEAR DEAREST MOLLIE:

"You always promised to help me if I ever got into trouble, didn't you? Well, I'm in trouble now. Mamma told me this morning I am to marry some horrid fellow that I met when I was a child. His name is John Peniston, and I am to come down to him in his home with his father. I know I shouldn't like him. Dearest Mollie, can I come over to see you? I long to lay my head on your shoulder, and we will cry together darling. I think men are horrid. Write at once to your broken-hearted mother."

"John Ellis and his sister Mary lived in Carlton, and the old mother. John had been at college with Aubrey Peniston, and now enjoyed the post of friend and confidential adviser to that gentleman. John's sister Mary was his confidential adviser. To her John took the note. "He's in a bad way, Mollie, isn't he? Can you manage to accommodate him for a day or two?"

"I think so," replied Mollie. "Hal hal ha!" and Miss Mollie indulged in a fit of unseemly and apparently unprovoked merriment.

John, dying with curiosity, affected great silence.

"Sue this nonsense, Mollie," he exclaimed. "What are you cackling for, anyway?"

"Why, John, it is most ridiculous. Here is Clary coming down here to get rid of him! Just read her note."

John read the note, forgot his superior gravity, and laughed, too.

"Oh, the two fools!" exclaimed Mollie, at length: "they will be sure to fall in love the minute they see each other. Let me play them a trick."

John agreed, and the trick was wickedly planned. Mollie wrote to Clara Benning, informing her of her sympathies, shoulder to shoulder to that gentleman. John's sister Mary was his confidential adviser. To her John took the note. "He's in a bad way, Mollie, isn't he? Can you manage to accommodate him for a day or two?"

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